(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI SU. THIRUNAVUKKARASAR): (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise.

(c) Yes, Sir.

(d) Government has approved the full scope programme of restructured Media Lab Asia for a period of nine years. It has been decided to set up a Steering Committee to suggest an organizational structure for the project in alignment with the prevailing practice in the Government and its R&D institutions. Media Lab Asia will continue to be a "not for profit" company under section 25 of the Indian Companies Act, 1956. The existing Board of Directors would be recast by including members drawn, *inter-alia*, from academia.

Failure of Sena Bhawan Exchange

†420. SHRI MOTILAL VORA: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the telephones of Parliament House, Ministers and Members of Parliament were out of order on the 5th June, 2003 due to failure of Sena Bhawan Exchange;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor; and

(c) the steps taken to prevent the recurrence of such incident in future?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI ASHOK PRADHAN): (a) Sir, there was a break-down of Rajpath Telephone Exchange on 5th June, 2003 for six hours which effected subscribers from its remote line units (RLU) including that connected from Sena Bhawan RLU.

(b) An expert committee constituted for investigating the cause of failure has reported that the Exchange failed due to fault in battery back-up.

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

(c) Following steps have been planned to prevent such occurrence in future:—

(i) Serving of VIP customers from more than one Exchange so that in case of failure of one Exchange, atleast partial service can be maintained from the other Exchange.

(ii) Diversity of media.

(iii) Replacement of batteries with new sets of batteries of higher capacity.

(iv) Provision of change-over of batteries and power-plants from one set to another to avoid simultaneous failure of both sets of batteries.

Procurement of equipment by BSNL without open tender

421. SHRI K.B. KRISHNA MURTHY: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Bharat Sanchar Nigam Ltd. proposes to procure equipment for three million lines without an open tender;

(b) whether the BSNL has chosen to procure the equipment from existing vendors like Motorola, Ericcson and ITI-Lucent through repeat order limited tender;

(c) whether the BSNL had found these companies involved in forming a cartel in 2001 when it had procured equipment for four million lines; and

(d) if so, the details thereof and the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI ASHOK PRADHAN): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. For 2 million lines through limited tender from the existing vendors.